

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSM-03 SSO-00 NSCE-00
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INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALEXANDRIA 700

FOLLOWING IS FROM AMBASSADOR IN ALEXANDRIA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, EG, LY
SUBJECT: FAHMY ON CURRENT EGYPTIAN/LIBYAN SITUATION

1. ASKED ABOUT CURRENT STATE OF PLAY RE EGYPTIAN/
LIBYAN PROBLEM, FAHMY TODAY GAVE ME CANNED REPLY. AFTER
QADHAFI INITIATED HOSTILITIES BY KILLING FOURTEEN
EGYPTIAN BORDER POLICEMEN, GOE HAD DECIDED TEACH HIM
A LESSON. EGYPTIAN MILITARY HAD DONE SO WITH VIGOR,
INFLECTING HEAVY EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL LOSSES ON
LIBYANS. HE CLAIMED NO FEWER THAN 75 LIBYAN TANKS,
PLUS A LARGE NUMBER OF APC'S, HAD BEEN DESTROYED.
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EGYPTIAN COMMANDOS HAD RAIDED "AL ADHAM" AIRFIELD,
DESTROYING RADAR AND OTHER EQUIPMENT. SECOND GROUP
OF EGYPTIAN COMMANDOS HAD RAIDED OASIS OF JAGHBUB,
WHERE LIBYANS HAD TERRORIST TRAINING CAMP HEADED BY
AN EGYPTIAN EXPATRIATE. LEADER AND OTHER DISSIDENT
EGYPTIANS SERVING AT CAMP HAD BEEN CAPTURED AND ARE
NOW IN PRISON. EGYPTIAN LOSSES "SLIGHT," BUT OTHERWISE

NOT IDENTIFIED. ACCORDING FAHMY, WHILE FIGHTING GOING ON, ALLOUD AND OTHER RCC LEADERS MADE DESPERATE TELEPHONE CALLS TO SADAT APPEALING TO THE PRESIDENT STOP FURTHER MILITARY ACTION. HEAVY LIBYAN PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT LOSSES, FAHMY CLAIMED, FORCED THEM TO DO SO.

2. MAINLY AS RESULT BOUMEDINE MEDIATION, CURRENT SITUATION IS QUIET. SADAT HAS FORMALLY AGREED TO CEASEFIRE, ALTHOUGH QADHAFI HAS NOT YET DONE SO. AT BOUMEDIENNE'S REQUEST, SADAT ALSO AGREED STOP EGYPTIAN MEDIA ATTACKS AS SOON AS LIBYA DOES LIKEWISE. FAHMY CLAIMED EGYPTIAN ATTACKS HAVE TONED DOWN, BUT LIBYAN MEDIA CONTINUE VILIFY EGYPTIANS. BOUMEDINE HAD ALSO BROUGHT LIBYAN MAP PURPORTING TO SHOW THAT LIBYAN ACTION AT SIDI OMAR WAS SOLELY TO RECOVER SMALL STRIP OF EGYPTIAN TERRITORY WHICH LIBYA CLAIMS. ACCORDING FAHMY, SADAT REJECTED THIS CLAIM OUT OF HAND. HOWEVER, IF QADHAFI "BEHAVES," THERE IS POSSIBILITY LATER "LOWER LEVEL" BILATERAL TALKS TO TRY TO RESOLVE SOME OF OUTSTANDING DIFFERENCES. IF QADHAFI ACTS UP AGAIN, EGYPTIAN PUNITIVE STRIKES WILL BE RESUMED. MATTER ENTIRELY UP TO QADHAFI.

3. I NOTED GENERAL ARAB REACTION TO HOSTILITIES HAD BEEN ONE OF REGRET AND IN SOME CASES THINLY VEILED CRITICISM OF EGYPTIAN ACTION. FAHMY ACKNOWLEDGED
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THAT GENERAL ARAB REACTION HAD INDEED BEEN SO, BUT INSISTED THAT PRIVATELY ARAB GOVTS HAVE ALL MADE KNOWN THEIR SUPPORT FOR EGYPTIAN ACTION. KING KHALID HAD SENT SADAT STRONG MESSAGE OF SUPPORT. NUMAYRI, WHO REMAINS WORRIED ABOUT LIBYAN THREAT TO SUDAN'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, HAD DONE THE SAME. IN FACT, FAHMY'S PUBLIC WARNING THAT ANY LIBYAN ATTACK ON SUDAN WOULD BE REGARDED AS AN ATTACK ON EGYPT (PUBLISHED IN AL MUSSAWAR INTERVIEW) WAS GIVEN AT NUMAYRI'S REQUEST. SADAT WAS SUPPOSED TO DO SO IN HIS RECENT ALEXANDRIA SPEECH, BUT GOT INVOLVED IN OTHER SUBJECTS AND FORGOT. HENCE, FAHMY HAD TO DO SO IN PRESS INTERVIEW.

4. COMMENT: PREDICTABLY, FAHMY PLACED ENTIRE BLAME ON QADHAFI. HE MINIMIZED ARAB PUBLIC REACTION, INSISTING MOST ARAB GOVTS KNOW THAT GOE PUNITIVE ACTION AGAINST LIBYA ALSO HELPS THEM. AS IS HIS WONT ON SUCH OCCASIONS, FAHMY WAS SMUGLY SATISFIED WITH EGYPTIAN MILITARY SUCCESSES AND CONVINCED QADHAFI HAS BEEN TAUGHT NEEDED LESSON. WHILE SITUATION CURRENTLY PASSIVE, HE DID NOT EXCLUDE RESUMPTION EGYPTIAN MILITARY ACTION IF LIBYANS OFFER GOE PEG

ON WHICH TO DO SO.

CHASE

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